

# **City of Rockville Environment Commission**

## **Sustainable Development and Energy Committee (SDEC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday April 27, 2010**

**Diamondback Terrapin Room, City Hall**

**7:00 pm**

#### **1. Welcome / Agenda Review/ Minutes Adoption**

Seth Adams called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 pm. In attendance: SDEC Chair Seth Adams, Laura Schlee, Lea Rosenbohm, and staff liaison Erica Shingara.

#### **2. Environment Commission Report**

Report on the April 13<sup>th</sup> Environment Commission (EC) meeting.

- The Environment Commission's booth at Science Day was a success and the new watershed model attracted attention. The booth received several questions regarding the use and disposal of CFL light bulbs. The SDEC may consider creating a child-friendly energy/green building display for next year or a handout to accompany the light display.
- At Science Day, a resident shared his experience installing a photovoltaic (PV) array. This could be a possible article for Rockville Reports (installation, incentives, performance, energy savings, pay back, etc.).

#### **3. Building Code Update/Green Building Regulations**

- The proposed amendments to Chapter 5, "Buildings and Building Regulations", including Article XIV, "Green Building Regulations," were reintroduced at the January 25, 2010 Mayor and Council meeting. The first public hearing was held on February 8<sup>th</sup> and a second public hearing was held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The public record closed on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Discussion and Instruction (D&I) occurred on April 5<sup>th</sup> and the main changes identified at the discussion included: items related to fire protection; the defining threshold for building additions (1,000 gsf vs. 1,500 gsf or 110%); and the proposed energy and indoor air requirements that exceed the ICC (R and U values). The Mayor and Council requested additional information on vesting/grandfathering, the current list of pre-applications and permits, threshold calculation methods and values for defining new construction. Ordinance adoption is proposed on May 10<sup>th</sup>. The main changes to the green building regulation are the modification of U and R-values to correspond to the 2009 IECC.
- A presentation on potential incentives for exceeding the green building code requirements was given to the Mayor and Council on April 5, 2010. Staff requested instruction on whether they wanted a City-green building incentive program and if so, which incentives should be further evaluated. Revenue and general economic concerns deterred the Mayor and Council from making any decisions on a local green building incentive program. Several Council Members felt that local incentives were not needed at this time due to the availability of Federal, State, County, and

Pepco incentives. However, the Council suggested that the Environment Commission work with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to evaluate the details of a potential tax credit program.

- The SDEC discussed potential green building tax credit program. It is difficult to create a new system that does not have some impact on revenue. The Committee reviewed Rockville's existing "New and Expanded Property Tax Credits for Businesses" (Section 22-12 of the City Code). Inquired if it is possible to modify this existing credit to include an eligibility requirement that the construction or expansion must achieve LEED Silver certification or higher. The SDEC requested information on:
  - Is there a sunset date for Section 22-12?
  - How many businesses have taken advantage of this business tax credit?
  - How much money has been granted as tax credits under this existing program?

#### **4. Education and Outreach**

- Residential- Invite homeowners with experience in renewable energy and energy audits to share their story in Rockville Reports or web site.
- Evaluate opportunities to update website to provide information on energy audits, solar, LED, windows, insulation, vapor barriers, incentives, and other green practices.
- Action item: Staff will research model programs and web site for the SDEC to review.

#### **5. Member News / Announcements / Upcoming Events**

- Over 40 people attended the business energy incentives information session in April.
- Rockville will be hosting the Maryland Climate Protection Network meeting on May 5, 2010. Representatives from U.S. EPA, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, ICLEI, and county and city governments from across the state will be attending to discuss climate protection and sustainability programs.

#### **6. Wrap-up and Adjourn**

The next SDEC meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 25, 2010 at the Rockville City Hall. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm.